



**Thinking Critically**

# Thinking Critically: Animal Rights

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# Foreword

“Literacy is the most basic currency of the knowledge economy we’re living in today.” Barack Obama (at the time a senator from Illinois) spoke these words during a 2005 speech before the American Library Association. One question raised by this statement is: What does it mean to be a literate person in the twenty-first century?

E.D. Hirsch Jr., author of *Cultural Literacy: What Every American Needs to Know*, answers the question this way: “To be culturally literate is to possess the basic information needed to thrive in the modern world. The breadth of the information is great, extending over the major domains of human activity from sports to science.”

But literacy in the twenty-first century goes beyond the accumulation of knowledge gained through study and experience and expanded over time. Now more than ever literacy requires the ability to sift through and evaluate vast amounts of information and, as the authors of the Common Core State Standards state, to “demonstrate the cogent reasoning and use of evidence that is essential to both private deliberation and responsible citizenship in a democratic republic.”

The *Thinking Critically* series challenges students to become discerning readers, to think independently, and to engage and develop their skills as critical thinkers. Through a narrative-driven, pro/con format, the series introduces students to the complex issues that dominate public discourse—topics such as gun control and violence, social networking, and medical marijuana. All chapters revolve around a single, pointed question such as *Can Stronger Gun Control Measures Prevent Mass Shootings?*, or *Does Social Networking Benefit Society?*, or *Should Medical Marijuana Be Legalized?* This inquiry-based approach introduces student researchers to core issues and concerns on a given topic. Each chapter includes one part that argues the affirmative and one part that argues the negative—all written by a single author. With the single-author format the predominant arguments for and against an

issue can be synthesized into clear, accessible discussions supported by details and evidence including relevant facts, direct quotes, current examples, and statistical illustrations. All volumes include focus questions to guide students as they read each pro/con discussion, a list of key facts, and an annotated list of related organizations and websites for conducting further research.

The authors of the Common Core State Standards have set out the particular qualities that a literate person in the twenty-first century must have. These include the ability to think independently, establish a base of knowledge across a wide range of subjects, engage in open-minded but discerning reading and listening, know how to use and evaluate evidence, and appreciate and understand diverse perspectives. The new *Thinking Critically* series supports these goals by providing a solid introduction to the study of pro/con issues.

## Overview

# The Animal Rights Debate

On August 17, 2016, animal rights advocates staged a protest at the Barnes & Noble bookstore in New York City where actress Amy Schumer was signing copies of her book, *The Girl with the Lower Back Tattoo*. The book was not the issue; rather, the fact that Schumer had previously worn a fur coat made by the Canada Goose company triggered the protest. “They torture and murder animals for their fur,”<sup>1</sup> one protester shouted.

In contrast to this peaceful protest, on July 22, 2016, radical animal rights activists cut locks, damaged fences, and freed a screech owl at a zoo in Athens, Georgia, to protest zoo confinement of wild animals. However, the activists were unaware that the zoo was caring for the owl because injuries prevented it from flying. “It was a pretty selfish act by uninformed people,” said zoological coordinator Clint Murphy. “If they . . . want to free the animals, they are ignorant, because these animals cannot live on their own. They pretty much condemned that owl to a slow death.”<sup>2</sup>

### Welfarists Versus Abolitionists

These events reveal much about the contemporary animal rights movement and debate, which centers on whether animals deserve rights and freedom from human domination. There is often confusion over what is meant by the term *animal rights movement* because animal advocates fall into two main factions: welfarists and abolitionists. Welfarists, or protectionists, may or may not support human-like rights for animals, but they do advocate using education and anticruelty laws to reduce cruelty toward animals. In contrast, abolitionists, or liberationists, seek to end

all human uses of animals and believe animals deserve human-like rights. The public often refers to individuals and organizations in both factions as animal rights activists.

Rutgers School of Law professor Gary L. Francione exemplifies the abolitionist position. “We have no moral justification for using nonhumans at all, irrespective of the purposes and however humanely we treat them,” he writes in his book *The Animal Rights Debate: Abolition or Regulation?*, which he coauthored with welfarist Robert Garner. Liberationists like Francione believe the welfarist emphasis on gradual progress and legal reform is counterproductive. Welfarist achievements, as Francione puts it, “make the public feel more comfortable about animal exploitation” and require a “disturbing partnership between animal advocates and institutionalized exploiters.”<sup>3</sup>

Evolutionary biologist Marc Bekoff, in contrast, supports the protectionist ideology. “Every action shines a light, whether it’s motivated by a desire to change society or simply to fix one injustice in the life of one animal,” he explains in his book *The Animal Manifesto*. “Every accomplishment, no matter how minor it seems, fuels our collective work on behalf of animals.”<sup>4</sup> In line with this belief, Garner argues that liberationist ideologies are too “inflexible and dogmatic”<sup>5</sup> to be accepted by most people, who view animals as inferior to humans.

There is also much debate over which methods animal rights activists should use to achieve progress. The peaceful protesters at the Schumer book signing embraced lawful tactics that are often used by welfarists and by some liberationists to enhance public awareness of animal cruelty. In contrast, radical liberationists like those who vandalized the Athens zoo advocate using any means necessary—including violence—to achieve their goals.

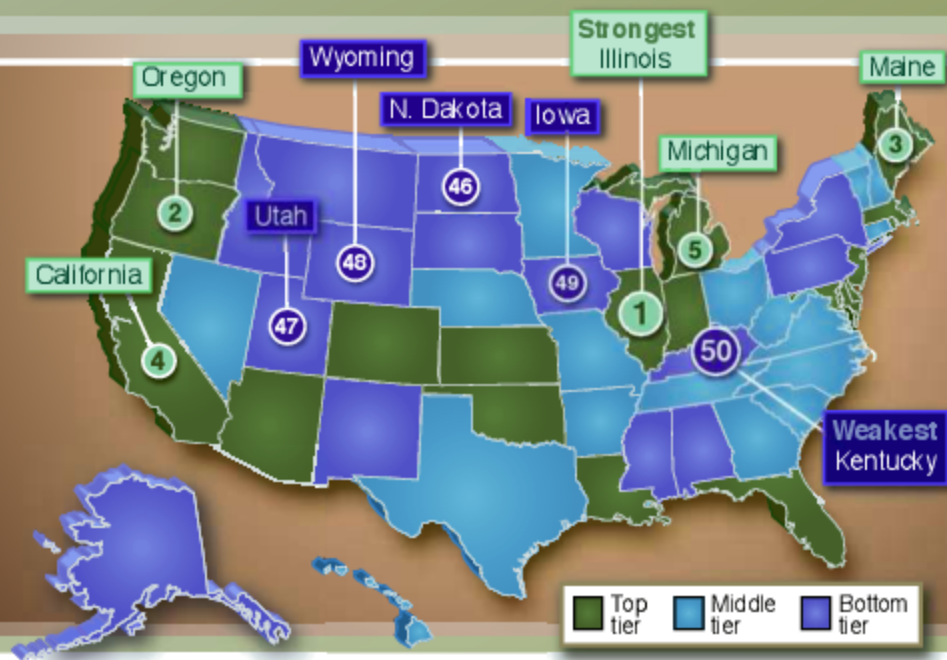
## Tactics and Results

The best-known radical abolitionist group, the Animal Liberation Front (ALF), is composed of independent underground cells that carry out illegal acts because they believe such acts—some of which are classified as terrorism—are effective. “Animal torture is a business,” states a North



## Strength of Animal Protection Laws Varies Widely

Illinois has the strongest animal protection laws in the nation while Kentucky has the weakest such laws, according to the 2015 Animal Legal Defense Fund (ALDF) report. The ALDF is involved in efforts to protect the rights and advance the interests of animals through the legal system. Its report, which has been produced annually for the last ten years, ranks animal protection laws in all fifty states. To arrive at these rankings the organization reviews fifteen different categories of laws, including those that address dogfighting and leaving an animal unattended in a vehicle. The 2015 report ranks states in three tiers: top, middle, and bottom tiers (with *top tier* referring to states with the strongest laws and *bottom tier* referring to states with the weakest laws).



Source: Animal Legal Defense Fund, "2015 US Animal Protection Laws Rankings," [aldf.org](http://aldf.org), December 2015, <http://aldf.org>

American Animal Liberation Press Office article. "We do not shut businesses with petitions and annual protests. We shut them down by destroying their profits and creating the personal detriments that make it too costly for them to continue."<sup>6</sup>

An attempted firebombing illustrates why ALF believes these tactics are effective. In June 2006 activists intended to firebomb the home of

primate researcher Lynn Fairbanks of the University of California, Los Angeles, but they accidentally left a homemade bomb on the porch of Fairbanks's neighbor. It did not explode because of a faulty timer, but it did convince Fairbanks's associate, Dario Ringach, whose family had also been harassed by ALF, to tell ALF that he would no longer conduct primate research. "Dario Ringach is a poster boy for the concept that the use of force or the threat of force is an effective means to stop people who abuse animals,"<sup>7</sup> ALF press office director Jerry Vlasak told the *Los Angeles Times*.

Although radical abolitionists believe their actions are justified, law enforcement agencies and others who oppose their tactics call them terrorists. Psychologist Edwin A. Locke has particularly harsh words for such people. "The animal rights terrorists are like the Unabomber or the World Trade Center terrorists or Oklahoma City bombers," he wrote in an article for the *Los Angeles Daily News*. "They are not idealists seeking justice, but nihilists seeking destruction for the sake of destruction."<sup>8</sup>

### **Incremental Progress**

Although studies indicate that the majority of people in the general public disapprove of ALF's tactics, protectionists enjoy more support from the public. This has helped them diminish animal suffering in industries like entertainment. For example, for several decades the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) and other animal welfare groups aired videos documenting cruelty to circus animals, particularly elephants. The documented abuses included trainers poking and wounding elephants with hooked poles called bullhooks and chaining elephants in tiny pens for hours. The HSUS encouraged the public to boycott circuses and took legal action against the Ringling Bros. circus in particular.

In 2011 the owner of Ringling Bros., Feld Entertainment, paid the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) \$270,000 to settle claims of violating the Animal Welfare Act (AWA). In 2016 and 2017, animal advocates achieved even bigger victories. In May 2016, the last elephant show occurred in Providence, Rhode Island, and Ringling Bros. moved its elephants to a conservation center in Florida. Then, in May 2017, the circus closed its doors completely.

Feld Entertainment said a variety of economic and social factors, including plummeting ticket sales after the elephant acts ended, led to Ringling Bros. closure. “We know now that one of the major reasons people came to Ringling Bros. was getting to see the elephants,”<sup>9</sup> stated chief operating officer Juliette Feld. But animal advocates and others believe the decision reflects changing public attitudes about animals in captivity. “The moment for elephants has passed,” stated Matthew Wittman, curator of the Harvard Theater Collection and author of a book about circuses. “It’s the same reason SeaWorld is retiring the orcas. There’s a trend in American culture that watching exotic animals for entertainment is no longer a good thing.”<sup>10</sup> Indeed, a 2016 survey of Providence residents found that 60 percent were happy the elephant acts were ending.

## The History of Animal Rights

Most of the attitude and policy changes regarding animal welfare evolved over time as a result of the efforts of pro-animal activists. Although people have questioned the morality of using animals for food, labor, entertainment, and research throughout history, no real progress occurred until a clearly defined animal rights movement began in England during the eighteenth century.

Historians believe the philosophies introduced by British attorney Jeremy Bentham in 1781 jump-started the animal rights movement. Bentham was the first to formally argue that animals deserve legal protection rather than being “degraded into the class of *things*,”<sup>11</sup> as their legal status at the time mandated. Supporters began lobbying for laws to protect animals, and in 1824 they formed the first pro-animal organization, the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RSPCA). The RSPCA’s efforts resulted in anticruelty laws being passed despite staunch opposition. The group also opened the first animal shelters and veterinary hospitals during the 1840s and 1850s. During the 1860s the RSPCA launched antivivisection campaigns to stop medical experiments that involved live animals.

In 1866 social activist Henry Bergh started the American animal rights movement by founding the American Society for the Prevention

of Cruelty to Animals in New York. Bergh and other activists began challenging everyday animal cruelty, such as horse-drawn carriage owners routinely whipping exhausted or lame horses. Their efforts led lawmakers to pass anticruelty laws despite resistance and ridicule from opponents who called them fanatics. Carriage drivers repeatedly threatened Bergh, and in a 1901 *Harper's Monthly Magazine* article, reporter Rupert Hughes joked that animal advocates like Bergh insisted that animals could vote and were entitled to "a few newspapers printed in their language."<sup>12</sup> The meatpacking, circus, hunting, fur-coat, and medical research industries also fought against the new laws. Indeed, these industries remain the most influential organized foes of animal advocates during the twenty-first century.

Over the years activists convinced Congress to strengthen animal welfare legislation with laws like the 1958 Humane Slaughter Act, the 1966 and 1970 Laboratory Animal Welfare Acts, and the 1972 Marine Mammal Protection Act. Gradually the attitudes of many individuals changed as well. Although the majority of Americans still consume animal products like meat and eggs, experts note that concern for animal welfare continues to grow during the twenty-first century. For example, a 2015 Gallup poll found that 32 percent of Americans believe humans and animals deserve equal rights (up from 25 percent in 2008), and a 2015 Harris poll found that 50 percent of Americans oppose using animals in research and 47 percent support it (compared to 43 percent who opposed and 52 percent who favored it in 2009). Many animal rights activists view these numbers as important milestones, particularly in light of humanitarian Mohandas Gandhi's famous proclamation: "The greatness of a nation and its moral progress can be judged by the way its animals are treated."<sup>13</sup>

## Chapter Two

# Is It Moral to Eat Animals?

### It Is Moral to Eat Animals

- Animals have no moral standing, so it is moral to eat them.
- Eating meat is an integral part of human culture and the natural food chain.
- Animals exist for humans to use, so it is moral to eat them.
- Laws protect animals raised for food from being abused.



### The Debate at a Glance

### It Is Not Moral to Eat Animals

- Raising and killing animals for food causes these creatures great physical and emotional suffering.
- Laws designed to protect animals raised for food from abuse are ineffective and underenforced.
- Even so-called humane methods of raising and killing animals involve substantial abuse and suffering.
- Modern society and products make meat eating no longer necessary; people can get all the nutrition they need from plant-based foods and meat substitutes.

## It Is Moral to Eat Animals

“Larger brains benefited from consuming high-quality proteins in meat-containing diets, and, in turn, hunting and killing of large animals, butchering of carcasses and sharing of meat have inevitably contributed to the evolution of human intelligence in general and to the development of language and of capabilities for planning, cooperation and socializing in particular.”

—University of Manitoba environmental studies professor Vaclav Smil

Vaclav Smil, *Should We Eat Meat?* Oxford, UK: Wiley-Blackwell, 2013, p. 178.

### Consider these questions as you read:

1. Do you think that biblical references to human dominion over and superiority to animals make it moral for people to eat them? Why or why not?
2. What is your opinion of the argument that eating meat is moral because it has been part of human culture throughout history?
3. Do you agree with the argument that the existence of the food chain makes it moral for humans to eat animals? Explain your answer.

Editor's note: The discussion that follows presents common arguments made in support of this perspective, reinforced by facts, quotes, and examples taken from various sources.

There are many reasons why it is moral to eat animals. Among them is the fact that animals have no moral standing and often exist primarily for human use. Moreover, eating meat is an integral part of human culture, and laws protect animals used for food from being abused. For these reasons and more, people can feel good about their choice to eat meat and consume other animal products.

## A Long-Justified Morality

Biblical passages about God giving humans dominion over other creatures provide the earliest moral justifications for eating animals. For thousands of years, major world religions like Christianity and Judaism have used these passages as a guide for how to use animal products. “Part of the right God gives us is to use animals when necessary,” explains Christian theologian Brian Saint-Paul. “Not to exploit them, but to use them for clothing . . . and most often for food.”<sup>31</sup> He emphasizes that with this right comes the obligation to support humane methods of keeping and slaughtering animals. Judaism embraces similar justifications for and responsibilities associated with eating animals. In fact, traditional Jewish laws that govern kosher food—which prohibits Jews from eating certain animals like pigs or from mixing milk and meat—emphasize that food animals must be humanely slaughtered by a specially trained person in a way that minimizes the animal’s pain and respects the sacrifice it is making to feed the person.

**“Part of the right God gives us is to use animals when necessary. Not to exploit them, but to use them for clothing . . . and most often for food.”<sup>31</sup>**

—Christian theologian Brian Saint-Paul

The inability of animals to understand or act on moral rights and responsibilities also makes it moral to eat them. Just as animals do not act immorally when they eat other animals, people do not act immorally when they eat animals. As philosophy professor Timothy Hsiao puts it, “Since animals lack moral status, it is not wrong to eat meat.” Hsiao also points out that even though consuming meat may involve animal suffering, humans are not guilty of *morally* harming them. “Although animals experience pain as it is physically bad, their experience is not in itself *morally* bad,” he argues. “They are harmed in feeling pain, but this harm is not of a moral kind.”<sup>32</sup>

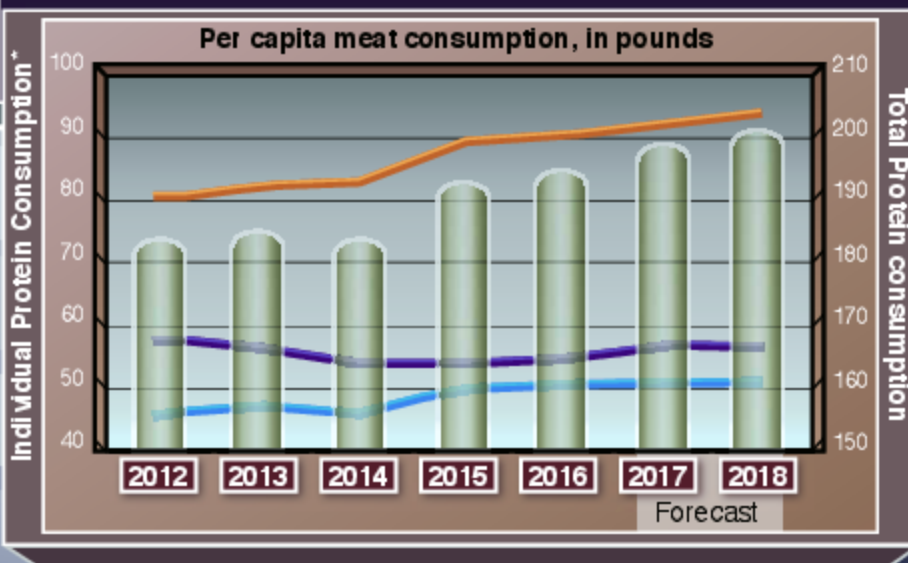
Eating meat has always been culturally acceptable. People enjoy eating meat, and meat and other animal-based foods are important for optimal health. All of these reasons also make it moral to consume animals. Food journalist Michael Ruhlman points out that the pleasure he derives

## Americans Think Meat Eating Is Moral

Data from the USDA and the Dutch financial firm Rabobank show that meat eating is either on the rise or has held steady since 2012. Americans are also likely to continue or increase their consumption of chicken, pork, and beef through at least 2018. This indicates that Americans think it is moral to eat animals and are unlikely to change their minds in the near future.

### Americans Eating More Meat

■ Beef, pork, and chicken   ■ Beef   ■ Pork   ■ Chicken



\* Beef, pork, and chicken

Source: Corey Hill. "This Chart Proves Americans Love Their Meat." MarketWatch, August 15, 2013. [www.marketwatch.com](http://www.marketwatch.com)

from eating meat is good for him personally and socially, noting that many social events center around traditions like grilling meat on a barbeque. This social cohesiveness, he believes, is a morally positive thing for humans. The health benefits of eating meat further underscore its morality, as it is morally right to strengthen one's body and mind. In fact, Ruhlman calls a vegan diet "a superlative weight-loss strategy"<sup>33</sup> because he and many others believe it does not provide enough calories or nutrients.

Research by evolutionary biologists and anthropologists supports the notion that eating meat is a natural, healthy, and culturally important



practice. In 1999 anthropologist Katharine Milton published a study that confirmed her hypothesis that eating meat “played an absolutely essential role in human evolution.”<sup>34</sup> Other scientific findings support Milton’s evidence that when human ancestors incorporated meat into their diet, doing so provided the energy, calories, and nutrients required to grow the brain and body into those that characterize modern humans. It also facilitated social connections, as human ancestors gathered around a fire to cook the animals they had hunted. Eating meat thus became a healthy and integral part of human culture and society.

The fact that humans share classic predatory features with other meat-eating or omnivorous predators further supports the naturalness of eating meat. These features include eyes on the front of the face and teeth that are suited for eating meat. “By nature, humans are meat eaters, and our bodies are designed for it,” says sports nutrition coach Kadya Araki. “We have incisors for tearing meat and molars for grinding it. If we were meant to subsist on vegetables alone our digestive system would be similar to that of the cow, with four stomachs and the ability to ferment cellulose in order to break down plant material.”<sup>35</sup>

In addition, eating meat is consistent with the laws of nature that feature a food chain in which animals eat other species to survive. One well-known person who used the food chain argument to justify the morality of eating animals was politician, statesman, scientist, and inventor Benjamin Franklin. In his autobiography Franklin wrote that he temporarily stopped eating animals because he objected to their slaughter. But one day he and some friends were preparing a fish fry feast, and Franklin was tempted to try the delicious-smelling cod. While preparing the fish, he saw smaller fish taken out of the stomachs of larger fish. “If you eat one another, I don’t see why we mayn’t eat you,”<sup>36</sup> he reasoned before indulging in the first of many more animal-based meals.

### **Food Animals Have a Purpose**

Meat eating is also moral when you consider that providing food for humans is the only reason many animals exist. “A great number of animals owe their lives to our intention to eat them,” explains British philosopher

Roger Scruton. “Their lives are (or can easily be made to be) comfortable and satisfying in the way that few lives led in the wild could possibly be. If we value animal life and animal comfort, therefore, we should endorse our carnivorous habits, provided it really is life, and not living death, on which those habits feed.” Scruton believes that as long as people think and act like what he calls “virtuous carnivores,” who are concerned about

**“A great number of animals owe their lives to our intention to eat them. And their lives are (or can easily be made to be) comfortable and satisfying in the way that few lives led in the wild could possibly be.”<sup>37</sup>**

—British philosopher Roger Scruton

how food animals are treated (as opposed to being “vicious carnivores”<sup>37</sup>) meat eating is moral.

Indeed, increasing numbers of people insist on buying humanely raised and slaughtered animals, and this elevates the morality of eating animals that are born and raised for this purpose. “I only eat meat when I know how it was raised. . . . I know exactly where to get products made with the sustainable and ethical practices I’m looking for,” states Catherine Gerson, who works for the

World Society for the Protection of Animals. “At the end of the day I am eating the animals that I ‘protect’ and I try to make a better life for.”<sup>38</sup>

Many consumers, businesses, and governments also support campaigns to eliminate the egregious abuses of food animals. For instance, more than twelve countries and several US states have banned foie gras (a fatty-liver delicacy) because of the cruelty involved in producing it. “Foie gras producers shove pipes down ducks’ throats to force feed them far more than they would ever eat,” says the HSUS. “Force feeding can cause bruises, lacerations, and sores. The duck’s liver may grow to ten times the normal size.”<sup>39</sup> By refusing to support this type of cruelty, meat eaters do much to enhance the morality of their dietary habits.

## Laws Protect Animals

Opponents of eating meat often argue that even humane slaughter methods still involve animal cruelty. However, with a combination of federal

and state laws that forbid cruelty to farm animals, these animals do not suffer unnecessarily or excessively. In particular, newer laws like California's Prevention of Farm Animal Cruelty Act, which voters passed in 2008 and which became active in 2015, prohibits confining farm animals to cages in which they cannot stand, lie down, turn around, or spread their limbs or wings.

In addition, government and private inspectors monitor compliance with anticruelty laws. Inspectors with the USDA Food Safety and Inspection Service, for instance, enforce standards for the housing, care, transport, and slaughter of food animals (except for poultry) at USDA-inspected facilities. The US secretary of agriculture is required to track and report any violations to Congress annually, and the USDA can impose fines and other penalties on offenders. Thus, laws support the morality of eating animals by protecting these animals.

## It Is Not Moral to Eat Animals

“The amount of cruelty, pain, suffering, and death that takes place in factory farms far surpasses the total amount of cruelty, pain, suffering, and death in all other venues [industries] combined.”

—University of Colorado, Boulder, ecology and evolutionary biology professor emeritus Marc Bekoff  
Marc Bekoff, *The Animal Manifesto*. Novato, CA: New World Library, 2010, p. 115.

### Consider these questions as you read:

1. Do you think the fact that the meat industry contributes to global warming makes it immoral to consume animals and animal products? Why or why not?
2. How do reports about the way food animals are treated affect your perception of the morality of eating meat?
3. Does the fact that people can get all the nutrition they need from a plant-based diet and meat substitutes influence your opinion of whether it is moral to eat meat? Why or why not?

Editor's note: The discussion that follows presents arguments made in support of this perspective, reinforced by facts, quotes, and examples from various sources.

When one really thinks about what is involved in consuming animals, he or she can only conclude that it is an immoral thing to do. Raising and killing animals for food subjects them to incalculable suffering, and laws designed to protect these animals are ineffective and underenforced. In addition, modern products make meat eating unnecessary. For these reasons and more, society should move beyond meat.

## Incalculable Suffering

Animals suffer greatly, both emotionally and physically, throughout the process of being raised, transported, and slaughtered for food. This is supported by studies that show that cows and other animals raised for food suffer emotionally while watching their fellow creatures being hung by their rear legs at slaughterhouses as they wait in line to have their throats slashed. Cows witnessing these horrors often cry out; if they too were not slaughtered momentarily, they might cry and grieve for much longer, according to evolutionary biologist Marc Bekoff and other animal behaviorists who have witnessed dairy cows grieving after their babies were taken away to be slaughtered.

Food animals also experience emotional and physical agony when their deaths are prolonged during the slaughter process. This includes being stunned with electricity or hit on the head, then having their throats cut by a knife. For chickens, it involves being thrown into scalding water to remove their feathers. “Sometimes the blade that’s intended to kill them misses their necks and they’re plunged into the scalding water and drowned alive,”<sup>40</sup> says HSUS public policy coordinator Alicia Prygoski.

Suffering and associated stress also reduce the life spans of animals that provide food products like milk or eggs. For instance, according to the HSUS, most egg-laying hens live in cramped battery cages that average 67 square inches (432 sq. cm)—the size of a laptop computer. These spaces are so small that they are unable to move around and build nests, and they experience stress and pain from frequent broken bones. These conditions reduce their natural life span from about thirteen years to less than two.

In all, the food industry is responsible for more animal cruelty, suffering, and death than any other animal use. According to the USDA, each year about 9 billion land animals, including cows, pigs, chickens, turkeys, and sheep, are killed in the United States alone, which amounts to hundreds of thousands of deaths per minute.

## Laws That Lack Teeth

Another reason why consuming animals is wrong is that anticruelty laws that are supposed to make the process of raising and slaughtering animals

for food more humane are, in reality, quite weak and rarely enforced. “Investigations and industry whistle-blowers have revealed abuses on farms and in slaughterhouses so horrific, most people cannot even bear to witness them,” notes the Animal Legal Defense Fund. “Farmed animals receive only minimal protections by our legal system.”<sup>41</sup> In addition, although the USDA is authorized to inspect the 148 million cows, pigs, and sheep slaughtered each year, it only has about 150 inspectors to do so. This means that much abuse remains unseen and unpunished. These shortcomings make it immoral for people to support a system

**“Investigations and industry whistle-blowers have revealed abuses on farms and in slaughterhouses so horrific, most people cannot even bear to witness them.”<sup>41</sup>**

—The Animal Legal Defense Fund

that routinely allows animal torture and exploitation. The meat industry and government will not be motivated to correct these abuses until the public stops buying meat.

In addition, the AWA and many state anticruelty laws do not even apply to farm animals. Those that do apply fail to prohibit immoral standard industry practices, such as removing animals’ testicles, tails, beaks, or horns without anesthesia. The Humane Methods of Livestock

Slaughter Act’s effectiveness is also limited because it excludes birds, which make up more than 90 percent of food animals. Numerous complaints about bird abuse led the USDA to adopt the Poultry Products Inspection Act in 2005, but the organization rarely enforces this law. In January 2015, for example, undercover investigators for the HSUS took videos of workers at a Minnesota slaughterhouse throwing sick chickens against walls, but the USDA did nothing. “USDA tends not to require animal agriculture to do anything it does not want to do,”<sup>42</sup> explains Dena Jones of the Animal Welfare Institute.

Another weak federal law is the Twenty-Eight-Hour Law, which requires vehicles that transport animals to slaughterhouses to stop every twenty-eight hours to give animals food, water, rest, and exercise. However, it is filled with loopholes, and there is no record of it ever being enforced since its inception in 1873. It also waives the twenty-eight-hour

limit in the event of “accidental or unavoidable causes that could not have been avoided,”<sup>43</sup> such as a storm. Even if the law were enforced, twenty-eight hours is still a long time for animals to stand in a crowded truck or rail car with no food, water, or room to lie down.

### **Consuming Animals Harms the Planet**

Raising and killing food animals also does significant damage to the environment, another reason why consuming these creatures is immoral. According to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, livestock are responsible for 14.5 percent of the greenhouse gas emissions worldwide. Greenhouse gases trap heat and cause global warming, which in turn is already causing habitat destruction, rising sea levels and flooding, extreme weather, increases in insect-borne diseases, and other threats. Cattle produce 65 percent of all livestock-related emissions, which come from producing, processing, and transporting animals and animal feed and from enteric fermentation (cow farts) and the decomposition of their manure. A 2013 study by livestock researchers in Kenya, Australia, and Austria found that feeding and raising livestock also uses one-third of the world’s freshwater supplies.

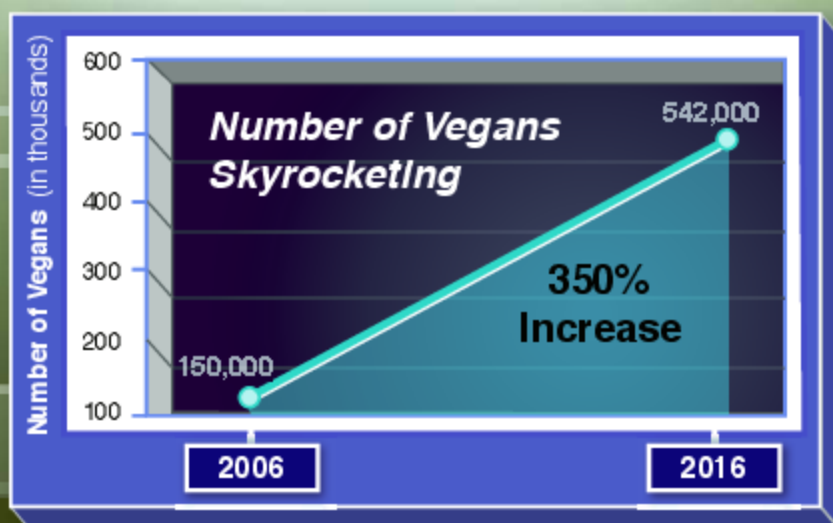
On the other hand, studies have found that cultivating and harvesting plant foods can reduce greenhouse gas production by up to 53 percent, compared to emissions produced from raising food animals. People who adopt a vegetarian or vegan diet thus help repair some of the environmental damage humans have wreaked. This is a moral thing to do because, as organizations like the Union of Concerned Scientists have warned, the planet will become uninhabitable if people fail to prevent global warming.

### **Humans No Longer Need to Eat Meat**

There was a point in time at which humans required meat for nutrition—few other protein sources were available. However, in modern times, there are plenty of nonmeat choices (tofu, tempeh, mock meat products, protein powders, vitamins, and more) that provide complete nutrition. Thus, eating meat is no longer essential from a nutritional perspective.

## Concern for Animals Is One Reason for Veganism's Rise

The number of vegans among young people in the United Kingdom has skyrocketed since 2006—and one of the reasons given for this change is concern about the morality of eating animals. A 2016 survey by the British newspaper the *Guardian* revealed a massive 350 percent increase in the number of vegans in the United Kingdom since 2006. Survey participants gave various reasons for why they decided to adopt a vegan lifestyle. Among the reasons given was concern about the treatment of animals and disgust with the idea of killing them for food.



Source: Sarah Marsh, "The Rise of Vegan Teenagers: 'More People Are Into It Because of Instagram,'" *Cheshire (Manchester, UK)*, May 27, 2013, [www.theguardian.com](http://www.theguardian.com).

Eating less or no meat is also moral because it has been shown to reduce the risk of heart disease and some cancers. "A well-planned vegetarian diet can give you good nutrition. It often helps you have better health"<sup>44</sup> by reducing fat intake and obesity, according to the National Institutes of Health. A 2014 study by doctors at Loma Linda University concluded that vegetarian diets in which people consume no meat, but do eat eggs and milk products, help people live longer. The same



was found true of vegan diets—in some cases, vegan diets conferred even greater protection against serious diseases. For example, vegetarians have a 55 percent lower risk of hypertension (high blood pressure) than nonvegetarians, and vegans have a 75 percent reduced risk compared to nonvegans. Overall, vegetarians and vegans have a 50 percent reduced risk of developing colon cancer, a 26 to 68 percent lower risk of dying from heart disease, and a 48 percent lower risk of dying from breast cancer. Caring for one's health is certainly moral, as is reducing the enormous amount that people and governments spend treating serious diseases each year.

**“A well-planned vegetarian diet can give you good nutrition. It often helps you have better health.”<sup>44</sup>**

—The National Institutes of Health

### **The First Step**

Perhaps most telling is that when people take the first step toward stopping animal consumption, they become more willing to commit to total ethical veganism, which involves not supporting any activity in which humans abuse animals, including wearing clothing that contains leather or fur. This is because they realize that exploiting animals—for any purpose—is morally unacceptable. As law professor Gary L. Francione says, animal consumption “is the primary practice that in effect legitimizes all other forms of exploitation.”<sup>45</sup> Francione finds that when people stop eating meat, they are more likely to conclude that animals are living creatures that deserve dignity and compassion, which makes their subjugation and abuse immoral.

## Chapter Four

# Is It Ethical to Experiment on Animals?

### It Is Ethical to Experiment on Animals

- Medical and scientific progress depends on experiments with animals.
- There are no viable alternatives to using animals in experiments.
- Advancing human medical science is worth any animal suffering involved.
- Laws prevent experimenters from imposing any suffering on animals that is not scientifically warranted.



### The Debate at a Glance

### It Is Not Ethical to Experiment on Animals

- The suffering and abuse experimental animals endure far outweigh any potential medical breakthroughs.
- Animal experimentation rarely, if ever, leads to new treatments for human diseases.
- There are viable alternatives to animal experimentation, including computer models and in vitro studies.
- Anticruelty laws do not effectively protect animals used in research.

# It Is Ethical to Experiment on Animals

“If we want to advance our biological knowledge toward the end of creating new medical treatment and cures, we absolutely must allow animal research.”

—Attorney and author Wesley J. Smith

Wesley J. Smith, “Animal Rights War on Medical Cures,” *National Review*, May 17, 2014. [www.nationalreview.com](http://www.nationalreview.com).

## Consider these questions as you read:

1. Do you agree with claims by researchers that advancing human health is worth exposing laboratory animals to suffering and death? Why or why not?
2. Some people have called psychologist Edward Taub an animal torturer, but others regard him as a dedicated scientist who brought hope to thousands of paralyzed people. In your opinion, which label is appropriate, and why?
3. What is your opinion about the US government’s 2015 ban on experiments that involve chimpanzees? Do you think the ban will significantly impact human health? Why or why not?

Editor’s note: The discussion that follows presents common arguments made in support of this perspective, reinforced by facts, quotes, and examples from various sources.

It is ethical to experiment on animals, even when this involves pain and death. This is because the potential benefits to human health far outweigh any concerns about animal welfare. Since human health and well-being are the most important aspects of human existence, using animals to save human lives is widely accepted and morally just. As philosophy

professor Carl Cohen puts it, “If the common killing of them for food or convenience is right, the less common but more humane uses of animals in the service of medical science are certainly not less right.”<sup>66</sup>

### Medical Progress Depends on Animal Experimentation

Medical progress depends on animal experimentation. “For more than a hundred years, virtually every medical breakthrough in human and animal health has been the direct result of research using animals,”<sup>67</sup> states the California Biomedical Research Association. Examples include studies on guinea pigs and nonhuman primates in the 1990s that led to the first new asthma treatment in twenty years (drugs called leukotriene-receptor agonists), and studies on chimpanzees in the 1950s that led to the first polio vaccine. Before the vaccine was developed, polio killed millions and disabled millions more each year. Vaccines that prevent rabies, distemper, and feline leukemia in animals were also born from animal research.

One of the most controversial breakthroughs resulted from psychologist Edward Taub’s research at the Institute for Behavioral Research in Silver Spring, Maryland. Taub’s studies on macaque monkeys proved that neuroplasticity—the brain’s ability to rewire itself after its normal connections are severed—can be induced by forcing animals to move paralyzed limbs. After an undercover animal rights activist convinced authorities to charge Taub with animal cruelty in 1981, he spent several years legally clearing his name. He finally resumed his work at the University of Alabama, Birmingham, where he established constraint-induced movement therapy as a way to help stroke victims recover the use of disabled limbs. “Today stroke victims have hope because Taub resumed his work at the University of Alabama,”<sup>68</sup> writes NAIA president Patti Strand.

**“If the common killing of them for food or convenience is right, the less common but more humane uses of animals in the service of medical science are certainly not less right.”<sup>66</sup>**

—University of Michigan philosophy professor Carl Cohen

Had Taub not continued his experiments on animals, people like James Faust would be permanently disabled. The right side of Faust's body was paralyzed by a stroke, but after several weeks of therapy at Taub's clinic, he regained the use of his right arm and leg. "The doctors weren't sure I would make it through the night when I had my stroke," he says. "Now I manage to mow my grass—and I've got almost two acres."<sup>69</sup>

## No Viable Alternatives

In addition, there are no viable alternatives to animal research; without it, medical progress would stagnate and scientists would have to endanger human lives to investigate experimental treatments. The need for animal testing stems from the fact that the complex interactions between body systems in living creatures make it "impossible to explore, explain, or predict the course of diseases or the effects of possible treatments without observing and testing the entire living system of an animal,"<sup>70</sup> explains

**"For more than a hundred years, virtually every medical breakthrough in human and animal health has been the direct result of research using animals."<sup>67</sup>**

—The California Biomedical Research Association

the California Biomedical Research Association. Thus, it is not always possible to use alternative methods like computer models (known as *in silico* studies) or human cells outside a living body (*in vitro* studies) to predict the effects of a new disease treatment.

The fact that animals and humans share much DNA and physiology also makes animals important for medical research. For instance, mouse and human DNA are more than 98 percent identical, and chimpanzee and human DNA are 99 percent identical. These animals' systems are therefore similar enough to those of humans to make accurate predictions about responses to disease treatments. In some cases, chimpanzees are the only animals that develop certain human diseases. Albert Sabin, who developed the first polio vaccine, stressed that his research depended on chimpanzees because they are the only animals that acquire and react to the polio virus like humans do.

This is why the 2015 National Institutes of Health (NIH) announcement that chimpanzees can no longer be used in biomedical and behavioral research in the United States was so devastating to medical science. The NIH did this because chimpanzees are now endangered, but in doing so it set off a firestorm of criticism from researchers who believe chimp studies are essential for medical progress. The Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology, for instance, stated that research on diseases like viral hepatitis would languish since chimps are the only nonhuman animals susceptible to infection with the five main hepatitis viruses. Indeed, chimp research led to diagnostic tests and vaccines for the hepatitis A and B viruses in the 1990s and 1980s, respectively, cutting human infection rates for hepatitis A by 92 percent and hepatitis B by 82 percent. There is still no vaccine for hepatitis C, which affects 2.7 to 3.9 million Americans, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

### **Researchers Cannot Impose Unjustified Suffering**

Laws like the AWA require that scientists treat laboratory animals humanely. They also require scientists to demonstrate that any pain the animals suffer is scientifically necessary. These regulations make sure animal experimentation is undertaken morally and ethically. In addition, research institutions have Institutional Animal Care and Use Committees (IACUCs) made up of experimenters, animal care technicians, and veterinarians who review each experiment proposal. The IACUCs have the authority to reject proposals that committee members believe involve undue suffering for animals.

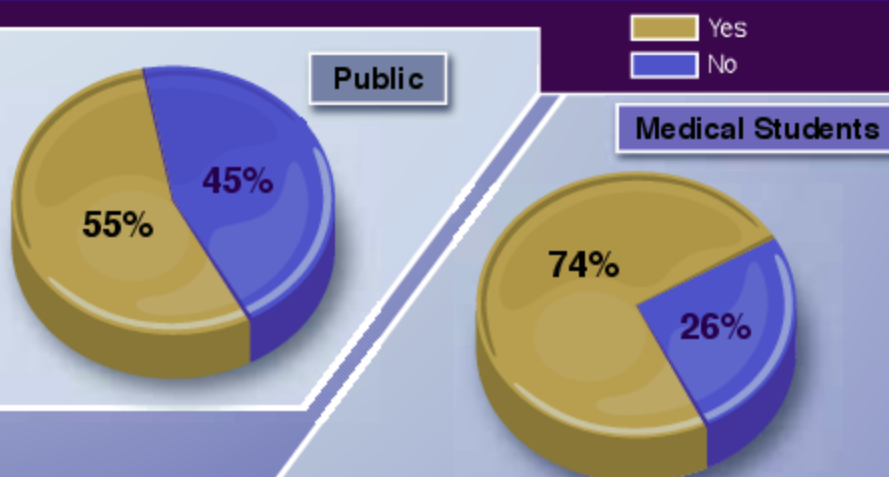
The NIH also oversees biomedical research. It requires scientists to follow rules about humane practices published in its *Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals*. In addition, a private organization called the American Association for the Accreditation of Laboratory Animal Care inspects research facilities and can deny accreditation if evidence of inhumane care is found.

Researchers are also bound by moral principles known as the Three Rs, which were introduced by scientists William Russell and Rex Burch in 1959. The Three Rs prescribe the replacement, reduction, and refinement

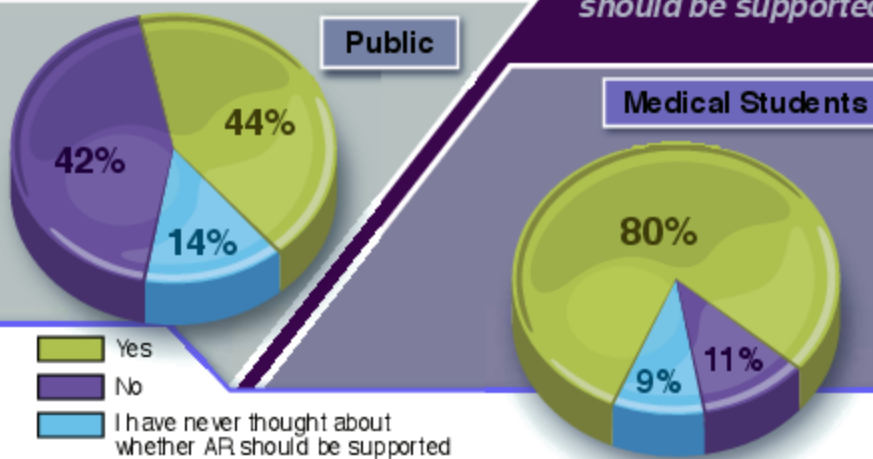
## The Majority of People Support Using Animals in Biomedical Research

A 2016 North American study by researchers at the University of Alberta in Canada reveals that most members of the public and even greater numbers of medical students believe it is ethical to use animals in biomedical research. Support for animal research is greater among medical students than among the general public, but one of the primary reasons people in both groups support such research is that it benefits humans.

### Animal Experimentation Benefits Humans Greatly



*In order to achieve human benefits, research that results in harm to animals (such as pain, suffering and early death) should be supported.*



of studies that harm animals. Scientists must demonstrate that using animals is the best, or only, option, and that cell cultures, computer models, or other methods are not applicable to a particular project. The Three Rs also limit an experiment's intended uses. "The use of animals in science is acceptable ONLY if it promises to contribute to understanding of fundamental biological principles, or to the development of knowledge that can reasonably be expected to benefit humans, animals or the environment,"<sup>71</sup> explains the Canadian Council on Animal Care.

### **Animals Are Important in Science Education**

The Three Rs apply not only to biomedical research but also to science education, especially that that features classroom animal dissection. Although dissection is controversial, it too is guided by reasonable principles and ethics. Many schools, for example, allow students to opt out of dissections and to use alternatives like computer models. But most science teachers and organizations like the National Science Teachers Association (NSTA) favor traditional dissection because they believe students learn best when they use real animals. "There isn't any substitute for the real thing," says David Evans of the NSTA. "You can study the physics of music and study the great composers, but that's not going to make you a violinist. Learning is a sensory experience and touching things matters."<sup>72</sup> Canadian teachers who participated in a 2012 study on classroom dissection also noted that dissection prepares students for scientific or medical careers and teaches them to respect living creatures while advancing science. For all of these reasons, using animals in classroom teaching and research is ethical because scientific and medical progress depends on the next generation to continue advancing these important endeavors.



# It Is Not Ethical to Experiment on Animals

“Imagine spending your entire life as a hospital patient or prisoner, and this will only begin to approximate the life of an animal in a laboratory. What happens to you can range from uncomfortable to agonizing to deadly—and you are helpless to defend yourself.”

—The New England Anti-Vivisection Society

New England Anti-Vivisection Society, “Animals in Research.” [www.neavs.org](http://www.neavs.org).

## Consider these questions as you read:

1. Do you think dissecting animals in biology classes sends students the message that animal lives are not valuable? Explain your answer.
2. Do you think exposing millions of animals to painful experiments and death each year is worth it if even one experiment saves human lives? Why or why not?
3. Scientists claim that they never subject laboratory animals to unnecessary suffering, but videos from numerous animal rights activists show animals enduring what most people would consider torture. What is your opinion about how torture should be defined? Should the definition rely on assessments made by experimenters, laypersons, or bio-ethicists? Explain your answer.

Editor's note: The discussion that follows presents common arguments made in support of this perspective, reinforced by facts, quotes, and examples taken from various sources.

Animal experimentation is unethical for several reasons. For one, the suffering and abuse animals endure during experiments far outweigh

any potential medical breakthroughs. In addition, animal experimentation rarely, if ever, leads to new treatments for human diseases. There are many viable alternatives to animal experimentation, including computer models and in vitro studies. For these reasons and more, it is wrong to inflict suffering, disease, and death on millions of sentient creatures in the name of medical science.

### **The Suffering Is Vast**

Laboratory animals suffer immensely. They are confined to tiny cages, forced to undergo unnecessary operations, exposed to nasty germs and cancers, and submitted to other torture. “If anyone other than white-coated scientists treated monkeys, dogs, cats, rabbits, pigs, and so forth as they do behind the locked doors of the animal lab, he or she would be prosecuted for cruelty,”<sup>73</sup> states primate biologist Jane Goodall.

In one dramatic illustration of cruelty, Alex Pacheco, a cofounder of PETA, worked undercover in Edward Taub’s laboratory at the Institute for Behavioral Research. He took videos that documented how Taub’s macaque monkeys lived in tiny, feces-coated cages and were fed rarely, forcibly restrained, and given painful electric shocks until they moved their disabled limbs. Worse, Taub disabled these animals’ limbs by cutting the nerves that controlled them. Yet after Taub was cleared of animal cruelty charges based on a legal technicality, he was allowed to resume his torture of animals because he told regulators that any discomfort was scientifically necessary.

**“If anyone other than white-coated scientists treated monkeys, dogs, cats, rabbits, pigs, and so forth as they do behind the locked doors of the animal lab, he or she would be prosecuted for cruelty.”<sup>73</sup>**

—Primate biologist Jane Goodall

### **Animal Research Rarely Applies to Humans**

In addition to the vast suffering it causes, much animal research is done in vain. In fact, animal research rarely benefits human health because of the significant differences in human and animal physiology. For example,

many drugs that benefit animals are dangerous to humans and vice versa. In 2004 the arthritis drug Vioxx was taken off the market after it caused fatal heart attacks in about thirty-eight thousand people. Animal testing previously indicated Vioxx was safe. Another drug, aspirin, is safe for pregnant women but causes severe birth defects in mice, rats, dogs, cats, rabbits, and monkeys. John J. Pippin and Kristie Sullivan of the Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine (PCRM) state that up to 50 percent of the drugs approved by the US Food and Drug Administration are withdrawn from the market or are relabeled because of unforeseen problems. They warn that doctors who rely on animal tests to predict drug safety in humans “are willing to risk the health of patients.”<sup>74</sup>

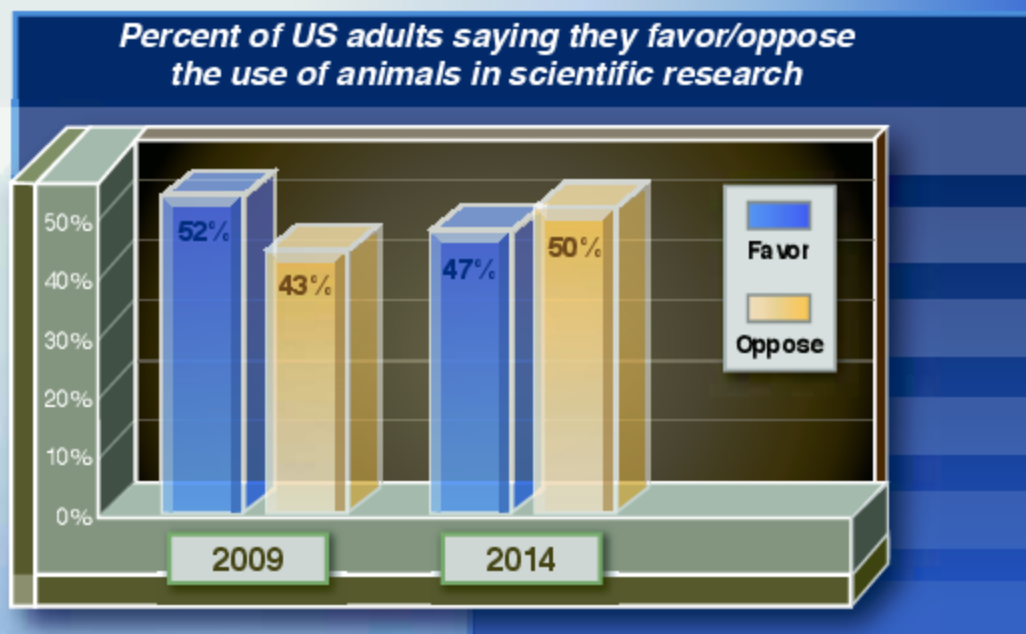
Other types of animal research are also not applicable to human health. For instance, numerous studies use monkeys to find a vaccine for HIV, which causes AIDS in humans. However, the virus that sickens monkeys is different from the one that affects people. As geneticist Jarrod Baily explains, scientists have spent billions testing dozens of AIDS vaccines, and “almost all of these vaccines protected chimpanzees from HIV infection, but none worked in humans.”<sup>75</sup>

### **Researchers Rarely Try Alternatives**

The ethical wrong of vivisection is compounded by the fact that scientists rarely use viable alternatives like human volunteers. They also do not take good advantage of *in vitro* studies (which use a test tube or petri dish or take place outside a living thing) or *in silico* studies (which feature computer modeling or simulation). Indeed, many products can successfully be tested without experimenting on animals. Consider the alternative testing methods known as EpiOcular and EpiDerm. These are *in vitro* cell cultures derived from human eye cells and skin cells, respectively, that have been used to test cosmetics and other products. Before these *in vitro* tests were invented, scientists tested products for toxicity by spraying them into rabbits’ eyes or applying huge doses to their skin. In addition to being more humane, *in vitro* tools have been found to be more accurate than animal testing. The MatTek Corporation, which produces EpiDerm, proved that it correctly identified skin irritants 100 percent of the

## Opposition to Use of Animals in Scientific Research Is Growing

A Gallup poll published in 2015 found that opposition to the use of animals in scientific research is growing. In a 2009 poll, 43 percent of US adults opposed the use of animals in scientific research. When asked the same question in a 2014 poll, 50 percent said they opposed the use of animals for this purpose.



Source: Cary Funk and Lee Rainie, "Opinion About the Use of Animals in Research," Pew Research Center, July 1, 2015. [www.pewinternet.org](http://www.pewinternet.org)

time, compared to 60 percent accuracy for tests on the skin of live rabbits.

Scientists at Harvard University's Wyss Institute have developed another type of product that combines *in vitro* and *in silico* technologies. Known as organs-on-chips, these are computer microchips lined with human cells that can mimic the composition and function of specific human organs, such as lungs, kidneys, or skin. These are proving to be ideal for identifying new cellular targets for drugs to treat certain diseases and for testing new compounds on functioning organs or combinations of organs. Although researchers are required to consider alternative methods for each experiment, investigations reveal that few researchers

actually give the alternatives serious consideration. This is why animal welfare agencies estimate that approximately 115 million laboratory animals are still experimented on worldwide each year.

Physician C. Ray Greek and his wife, veterinarian Jean Swingle Greek, believe that economic motives underlie much of the resistance to alternative methods. “Alternative protocols are not peddled by huge corporations, which have both the money and incentive to sway public sentiment,”<sup>76</sup> the Greeks write in their book *Sacred Cows and Golden Geese*. They note that animal research is a huge industry, and companies that breed, ship, sell, and use laboratory animals would lose money if less animal research took place.

### **Animal Research Breeds Insensitivity**

Animal experimentation is also unethical because it teaches that abusing animals is acceptable. Australian veterinarian Andrew Knight notes that veterinary students who perform animal research become desensitized to animal suffering and later fail to prescribe adequate pain medication to their patients. Studies support these observations. For instance, psychologists at the University of Edinburgh found that first-year veterinary students showed greater awareness of animal fear, pain, and boredom than fourth-year students, who had learned to emotionally detach themselves.

Similar concerns about medical students led American medical schools to phase out the use of live animals as teaching tools. As of June 2016, students at all accredited medical schools learned to insert breathing tubes and other such techniques on human cadavers rather than animals. Most high school and college biology curriculums, however, still include animal dissections. Dissections, states Goodall, teach students “that it is ethically acceptable to perpetrate, in the name of science, what from the point of view of the animals, would certainly qualify as torture.”<sup>77</sup>

### **Laws Do Not Protect Laboratory Animals**

Finally, animal experimentation is not made more ethical by the laws that are supposed to protect such subjects from harm. Even though Congress passed the AWA in 1966 to protect lab animals from undue

suffering and harm, this and other laws have not been enforced. Law enforcement agencies routinely fail to punish scientists who subject animals to unnecessary suffering. For example, in 2011 the PCRM filed complaints against Wayne State University cardiovascular researcher Donal O'Leary for forcing a dog named Queenie to run on a treadmill despite postsurgery pain and complications. The PCRM and veterinarians analyzed O'Leary's laboratory records and determined that Queenie and more than sixty other dogs suffered unnecessarily and "produced nothing to advance [human] heart failure prevention or management."<sup>78</sup> The PCRM filed numerous requests for the government and the university to shut the laboratory down, but USDA inspectors stated that any perceived cruelty was scientifically necessary. As of late 2016, the PCRM was still fighting this battle.

**"Any study that will advance science, even in a very small way, can be used to justify tremendous amounts of animal suffering, as long as the suffering is necessary to the advance."<sup>79</sup>**

—Yale University bioethicist and attorney  
Stephen R. Latham

In addition to not being enforced, the AWA does not cover the rats, mice, and birds that are used in 99 percent of all experiments. The research guide put out by the NIH covers all vertebrates, but the internal review boards for research institutions can override this guide and the AWA if they think an experiment's scientific value warrants it. "The result is that any study that will advance science, even in a very small way, can be used to justify tremendous amounts of animal suffering as long as the suffering is necessary to the advance,"<sup>79</sup> explains Yale University bioethicist and attorney Stephen R. Latham. Despite the existence of laws, the reality is that researchers can do practically anything to lab animals if they claim it is scientifically necessary.

# Animal Rights Facts

## Using Animals for Entertainment

- Investigators estimate that circus lions and tigers spend more than 95 percent of their time in small cages, and circus horses spend about 98 percent of their time tied up in small areas.
- A study by British biologist Ros Clubb found that captive orcas live an average of nine years, compared to up to one hundred years in the wild.
- Trophy hunter Walter Palmer paid \$54,000 for the privilege of killing a lion named Cecil at Zimbabwe's Hwange National Park on July 1, 2015.
- The World Association of Zoos and Aquariums (WAZA) closes zoos that violate its ethics standards.
- A January 2016 Ipsos MORI poll found that only 19 percent of Spaniards ages sixteen to sixty-five support the time-honored tradition of bullfighting, compared to more than 30 percent who supported the sport in 2013. Intense opposition by animal rights groups led numerous towns and the entire Catalonia region of Spain to ban bullfights by late 2016.
- Making a 40-inch (102 cm) fur coat requires killing either sixty mink, forty-two red foxes, forty raccoons, eighteen lynx, or fifteen beavers, according to evolutionary biologist Marc Bekoff.
- WAZA reports that more than 700 million people visit zoos and aquariums around the world each year, and zoos and aquariums contribute about \$350 million to animal conservation causes annually.
- There are approximately 750,000 animals in the care of AZA-accredited zoos and aquariums. This includes six thousand different species and one thousand threatened or endangered species.

## Using Animals in Research

- The AWA only protects about 1 percent of the animals used in research.
- The USDA reports that approximately eight hundred thousand animals were used in research in the United States in 2015, but this figure

- excludes the rodents, birds, and fish that constitute 99 percent of the animals used in research since the AWA does not count them as animals.
- The Johns Hopkins University Center for Alternatives to Animal Testing estimates that about 20 million animals lose their lives to teach students about biology each year.
  - Students can learn about animal biology using interactive software like the Digital Frog, DryLab Suite, Sniffy the Virtual Rat, Catlab, and other programs.
  - A 2015 Gallup poll found that 67 percent of Americans are concerned about animals used in scientific research.
  - In June 2016 the Australian government announced that testing cosmetics on animals will be banned starting in July 2017 in response to polls showing that 85 percent of Australians oppose this practice. Israel, India, and the European Union have already instituted this type of ban.
  - The Foundation for Biomedical Research reports that between 1979 and 2015, only one Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine was awarded to researchers who did not use animals in their studies.

### Using Animals for Food

- According to the UN Food and Agriculture Organization, 347 million tons (315 million metric tons) of meat were produced worldwide in 2014.
- A 2013 study by scientists at the Swedish Institute for Food and Biotechnology found that greenhouse gas emissions from animal food production in Sweden decreased 14 percent between 1990 and 2005 because of reduced production of food animals.
- The US Environmental Protection Agency reports that agriculture, including livestock-associated activities, was responsible for 9 percent of the US greenhouse gas emissions in 2014.
- According to the USDA, each year about 9.5 billion chickens and turkeys, 100 million pigs, and 45 million cattle and sheep are slaughtered for food in the United States.
- A 2015 Harris poll found that 3.4 percent of American adults follow a vegan diet (consuming no animal products) and that around 25



percent are vegetarians who eat no meat but consume milk and egg products.

- A 2013 study conducted by the AHA found that 89 percent of the people surveyed were concerned about the welfare of farm animals, and 74 percent were willing to spend more for meat, eggs, and dairy products from humanely raised animals.
- The Farmers and Hunters Feeding the Hungry Program provided 18 million servings of meat to needy people through food banks between 1997 and 2016; participating hunters donated animals they hunted for this purpose.

## Related Organizations and Websites

### **American Humane Association**

1400 Sixteenth St. NW, Suite 360

Washington, DC 20036

website: [www.americanhumane.org](http://www.americanhumane.org)

The American Humane Association strives to ensure that animals and children are treated compassionately and that their welfare and well-being are addressed by society and government. The organization initiates and promotes programs that protect animals and children from abuse and neglect. It also supports research and education programs that further these goals.

### **Animal Liberation Front (ALF)**

3371 Glendale Blvd., Suite 107

Los Angeles, CA 90039

website: [www.animalliberationfront.com](http://www.animalliberationfront.com)

ALF is a loosely organized international organization of independent cells and individuals who advocate using any means necessary, including violence and other illegal methods, to end animal exploitation and suffering.

### **Center for Consumer Freedom**

PO Box 34557

Washington, DC 20043

website: [www.consumerfreedom.com](http://www.consumerfreedom.com)

The Center for Consumer Freedom works to counteract the activities of animal rights groups. It believes Americans have the right to make their own choices to eat animals and wear animal products, and to engage in activities of their own choosing.

### **Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology (FASEB)**

9650 Rockville Pike  
Bethesda, MD 20814  
website: [www.faseb.org](http://www.faseb.org)

The FASEB is a coalition of scientific societies and biomedical researchers. It shares information about research progress and advocates for the advancement of medical science through research.

### **The Hastings Center**

21 Malcolm Gordon Rd.  
Garrison, NY 10524  
website: [www.thehastingscenter.org](http://www.thehastingscenter.org)

The Hastings Center is a nonpartisan bioethics research institute comprising scholars from the fields of law, philosophy, medicine, education, and other relevant fields who publish books and papers on ethical practices in medicine. One issue the center studies is animal experimentation.

### **Humane Society of the United States (HSUS)**

1255 Twenty-Third St. NW, Suite 450  
Washington, DC 20037  
website: [www.humanesociety.org](http://www.humanesociety.org)

The HSUS is the largest animal protection agency in the United States. It provides direct help to animals in many ways, including hands-on care, and offers education programs for the public. It also lobbies lawmakers to pass legislation that protects animals from all types of abuse.

### **National Animal Interest Alliance (NAIA)**

PO Box 66579  
Portland, OR 97290  
website: [www.naiaonline.org](http://www.naiaonline.org)

The NAIA is a coalition of business, agricultural, scientific, and recreational groups dedicated to promoting animal welfare and responsible animal use. It seeks to educate the public about issues affecting animals and opposes animal rights extremism.

### **People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA)**

501 Front St.

Norfolk, VA 23510

website: [www.peta.org](http://www.peta.org)

PETA is a nonprofit animal rights organization that speaks out and conducts protests and undercover investigations about the inhumane treatment of animals in the food, clothing, entertainment, and research industries. Its website has information about a variety of topics related to animal rights.

### **Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine (PCRM)**

5100 Wisconsin Ave. NW, Suite 400

Washington, DC 20016

website: [www.pcrm.org](http://www.pcrm.org)

The PCRM comprises medical doctors who advocate ending the use of animals in education and research. It also educates the public on issues that involve animal cruelty.

### **Protect the Harvest**

PO Box 10116

Columbia, MO 65205

website: <http://protecttheharvest.com>

Protect the Harvest is an organization that works to protect the right to hunt, fish, farm, eat meat, and own pets. Its goal is to counteract animal rights groups that seek to deny people the basic rights to live as they see fit.

# For Further Research

## Books

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Mark Rowlands, *Animals Rights: All That Matters*. London: Hodder & Stoughton, 2013.

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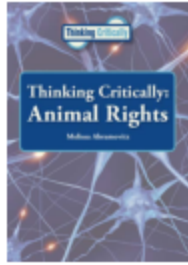
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## About the Author

Melissa Abramovitz writes fiction and nonfiction for all age groups but specializes in educational nonfiction books and magazine articles for children and teens. She graduated from the University of California, San Diego, with a degree in psychology and is also a graduate of the Institute of Children's Literature.

## Book Index



Animal Rights

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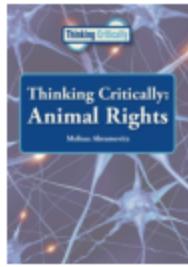
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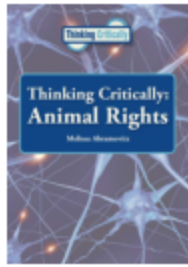
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